

New York State Attorney General
Letitia James

Dear New Yorkers:



Our communities have been ravaged by unscrupulous businesses which actively deceive consumers into believing that they offer legal products, including synthetic marijuana, for drug effect. These products are none of that—they're deadly products hiding in colorful wrappings. Contrary to their claims, these products are illegal to sell in New York State. It's despicable that anyone would seek to take advantage of vulnerable members of our communities in this way.

I am determined to do everything in my power to take designer drugs out of circulation and aggressively prosecute businesses and individuals who peddle these poisons.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Letitia James". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Letitia James

Designer Drugs are Dangerous

Although they aim to mimic the effects of drugs like marijuana, LSD and cocaine, the chemicals used in these products produce toxic and often lethal effects, including:

- Seizures
- Anxiety and Paranoia
- Organ failure
- Homicidal/suicidal thoughts
- Vomiting
- Chest pains and heart attacks

Designer Drugs are Illegal

It is always illegal to:

- sell an unapproved product for drug effect;
- sell a mislabeled product when the use is for a drug effect.

Take Actions

The Attorney General has sued businesses throughout New York State to prevent them from selling designer drugs. If you are aware of a business or individual who continues to sell designer drugs, please contact the Attorney General's Office at 1-800-771-7755

Additional Resources

If you suspect someone has used designer drugs, call the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222 or 911

For help with alcohol or substance abuse, call or text the NYS HOPEline at 1-877-846-7369

COMBATING designer drugs



New York State Attorney General
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Albany, New York 12224
1-800-771-7755
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NEW YORK STATE OFFICE
of the
ATTORNEY GENERAL
Consumer Frauds Bureau

So-called “designer” or “synthetic” drugs are psychoactive (mind altering) substances that mimic the effects of common street or illegal drugs. It is illegal to possess, sell, or manufacture designer drugs in New York State.

Common Designer Drugs

Synthetic Marijuana

Synthetic Marijuana DOES NOT contain marijuana. Sold under street names like “K2” and “Spice,” synthetic marijuana claims to imitate some of the effects of marijuana, but common reactions include increased heart rate, seizures, nausea and agitation. It usually appears as a dried plant (but also comes in liquid form). The chemicals sprayed on the plant material wildly vary in strength and composition, so it is impossible to predict one’s reaction to it. Consumption of synthetic marijuana can lead to loss of consciousness and death.

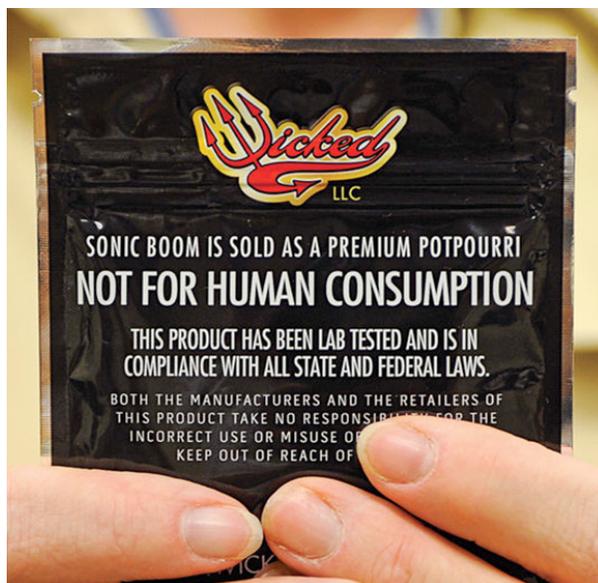
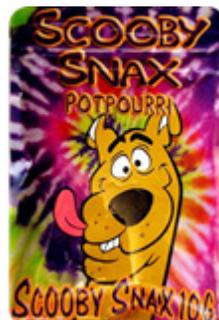


Other forms of synthetic drugs:

Botanicals. Party Powders. Research Chemicals. These are just some of the names given to synthetic drugs that use chemicals to mimic other illegal drugs like LSD and crystal meth. Some actual effects include nausea and vomiting, chest pains, heart attack, seizures, and death.

Deceptive Marketing Targets Youth

Synthetic, or “designer” drugs are often packaged in a way to attract children and young adults: cartoon and scary characters decorate the package. They often claim to be “all natural” and “botanical.” Synthetic marijuana, in particular, is sometimes labeled “potpourri” or “herbal incense.” Often the labels will claim that the product is “Not for Human Consumption.”



By mislabeling the products, manufacturers are trying to evade legal requirements that require them to list ingredients and undergo inspections. They often falsely claim that the product is legal.

Look For Red Flags

Labels should inform

Synthetic drugs lack required information on the label. Labeling laws protect consumers by letting them know what is in the product, how it should be used and warnings about misuse. This is true of food, medication, cosmetics, even cleaning products. Labels should also name the manufacturer and often provide contact information.

If a product lacks this information, don’t buy it, don’t use it.

Sometimes labels mislead

A label may make unsubstantiated or distracting claims, such as:

- Dietary Supplement! All Natural! Botanical! Herbal! Many natural, botanical and herbal products are also lethal and illegal. Without required ingredient and dosage labels, these claims are both dangerous and meaningless.



- “Lab certified!” “Legal!” Be very wary of any product that tells you it’s legal, especially if they don’t tell you what’s in it.

How It’s Sold

When sold in stores, these products are typically in a locked case or behind a counter, an indication that the products are suspect and illegal.